

Remarks

Claims 1-41 are currently pending and stand rejected. Claims 1, 5-8, 10, 18, 22-25, 27-30, and 33-37 have been amended. Applicants assert that all claims are now in condition for allowance as set forth more fully below.

Rejections

Claims 1, 4, 18, and 21 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Ortega (US Pat 6,535,848). Additionally, claims 2, 5, 7-11, 13-15, 17, 19, 22, 24, 37, 38, and 40-41 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ortega in view of Padmanabhan (US Pat 6,219,638). Claims 3, 6, 20, and 23 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ortega and allegedly admitted prior art, while claims 25-27 and 29 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ortega in view of Padmanabhan and further in view of Damiba (US Pub 2002/0169605). Claims 12, 16, and 39 are rejected as being unpatentable over Ortega in view of Padmanabhan and allegedly admitted prior art while claim 28 is rejected as being unpatentable over Ortega in view of Padmanabhan, Damiba and allegedly admitted prior art. Claims 30, 31, 33-36 are rejected as being unpatentable over Ortega in view of Picoult (US Pub 2002/0065042) while claim 32 is rejected as being unpatentable over Ortega in view of Picoult and allegedly admitted prior art. Applicants traverse these rejections to the extent these rejections may apply to the currently pending claims.

The currently pending claims include recitations to recipient-designated assignments of numeric options to archival devices. None of the cited references disclose the recipient designating assignments of numeric options to archival devices. Accordingly, the pending claims are allowable over the cited references including the various combinations of references for at least these reasons. Furthermore, claims 1 and 37 recite that the recipient designated assignments are provided via an Internet site of a service provider. None of the cited references disclose the recipient designating assignments of numeric options via an Internet site of a service provider. Accordingly, claims 1 and 37 are allowable over the cited references including the various combinations of references for at least these additional reasons.

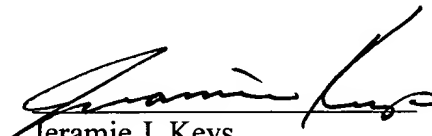
Conclusion

Applicants assert that the application including claims 1-41 is in condition for allowance. Applicants request reconsideration in view of the amendments and remarks above and further request that a Notice of Allowability be provided. Should the Examiner have any questions, please contact the undersigned.

No fees are believed due beyond the fee for continued examination and a one month extension of time. However, please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-3025.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: January 3, 2005


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